1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

619 721 were engaged in hostilities each could rely on the support of the other sections of the same tribe; but, in practice, they would often only join in if the other side was receiving assistance from neighbouring sections. When a tribe united for warfare there was a truce to disputes within its borders.

Tribes, especially the smaller ones, often united to raid foreigners. The Leek united with the Jagei and Western Jikany, and the Lou with the Gaawar to attack the Dinka; the Lou with the Eastern Jikany tribes to attack the Anuak; and so on. These military alliances between tribes, often under the aegis of a Sky-god, speaking through his prophet (p. 188), were of short duration, there was no moral obligation to form them, and, though action was concerted, each tribe fought separately under its own leaders and lived in separate camps in enemy country.

619 726 628 Fighting between Nuer of different tribes was of a different character from fighting between Nuer and Dinka. Inter-tribal fighting was considered fiercer and more perilous, but it was subject to certain conventions: women and children were not molested, huts and byres were not destroyed, and captives were not taken. Also, other Nuer were not considered natural prey, as were the Dinka.

619 681 Another defining characteristic of a tribe is that within it there is *cut*, blood-wealth paid in compensation for homicide, and Nuer explain the tribal value in terms of it. Thus Lou tribesmen say that among themselves there is blood-wealth, but not between themselves and the Gaajok or the Gaawar; and this is the invariable definition of tribal allegiance in every part of Nuerland. Between tribesmen there is also *ruok*, compensation for torts other than homicide, though the obligation to pay it is less generally stressed or carried out, while between one tribe and another no such obligation is acknowledged. We may therefore say that there is law, in the limited and relative sense defined in Chapter IV, between tribesmen, but no law between tribes. If a man commits an offence against a fellow tribesman he places himself and his kin in a legal position towards this man and his kin, and the hostile relations that ensue can be broken down by payment of cattle. If a man commits the same act against a man of another tribe no breach of law is recognized, no obligation is felt to settle the dispute, and there is no

Chapter Nine

WIDER RELATIONS AND INFLUENCES

THE NUER AS NEIGHBOURS

NUER living along the borders of Nuerland raid the neighbouring tribes and are raided by them, taking cattle. In the past they have taken people, but I do not believe that is done now to any large extent. 721

A number of Nuer have Dinka 'slaves' or servants, who have been taken in these raids, but they are usually treated as members of the family, except that the Nuer son or daughter takes precedence over the captive Dinka in being allowed to be married first. The Nuer name for Dinka means slave, and they consider them as an inferior tribe. [567]

The Nuer sees nothing wrong in these border raids, but rather delights in the fact that it gives him a chance to show his prowess over his neighbour.

Sometimes one Nuer village raids another Nuer village, and this starts a feud that is hard to quell. It may last over several years. If some one is killed retaliation is sought. A life for a life is generally the rule.

Government interference is usually necessary to settle any large raid or incessant raiding.

Nuer wars and troubles between villages and different tribes are usually the result of cattle raids or the infringement of Nuer marriage customs.

In case two neighbouring villages are at war, especially if they be Nuer and Anuak, each assembles all their people and adherents. A war-dance and song are staged for the benefit of the opposite side, so that they may be impressed with the large number and possible prowess of their opponents. 726●

[p. 71]

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

782 a line in the bush. He also used to sacrifice before his followers
789 as they advanced to battle. His son Gwek appears to have met his
death while making such a sacrifice before a military patrol sent
●[726] against him. Mr. Coriat, one of the officers on this patrol, has described how the Nuer attack was launched. 'Two long lines of men rushed out to either flank in an attempt to surround the troops while the main body of Nuer in the centre advanced more slowly but singing lustily and driving ahead of them a solitary white bull. The order to fire was given. The leading men and the bull reached to within 120 yards of the square before they fell and within a few minutes the whole mass of Nuer were fleeing in all directions. A long pursuit over rough and broken ground followed. Gwek, arrayed in a leather skirt with an iron skewer clutched tight in his hand and a brass pipe, the pipe of Dengkur [Ngundeng], lying beside him, was picked up dead beside the white bull.'[1]

782 Other prophets acted in the same manner in epidemics and war.
789 It has also been described to me how a whole section of the eastern Jikany Nuer went out to meet smallpox which was advancing into their territory. They went out to meet it with goats and sheep and pots of beer, and they slaughtered the animals and left their carcasses and the pots of beer in a line over which the smallpox should not cross. It was described to me as being like a *kegh*, a boundary line—more closely in meaning a line a leopard-skin priest makes on the ground before advancing warriors halt them so that a fight may be prevented.

When I was living in a small village on the Sobat river swarms of locusts descended on it and on its gardens, and the people went out to meet (*lor*) them in a body, leading a fawn-coloured goat (roughly the colour of the locusts) and beating their ox-hides, where the gardens adjoined the bush, and there sacrificed the goat. It fell with its head towards the bush. This was regarded as a favourable sign as it was in that direction that the people wanted the locusts to go. They soon departed. The carcass was left where it fell. I have earlier described how people go out to meet durra-birds which are eating their crops and how they make a similar sacrifice and leave the carcass in the bush. Nuer use the same word when speaking of the sacrifices made by kinsmen of twins at their birth. They say '*ba cuek luor*', 'the twins are met [with sacrifice]'.

[1] P. Coriat, 'Gwek, the Witch-Doctor and the Pyramid of Dengkur', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1939, p. 237.